

# A Streetcar Named Desire

## Scene I

### Vocabulary

**attenuates** – weakens in strength, force, or degree  
**auxiliary** – secondary, in addition to  
**dubiously** – with doubt or uncertainty  
**fluency** – ease, smoothness, eloquence  
**heterogeneous** – varied, diverse; mixed  
**implicit** – contained, embedded, inherent  
**incongruous** – not compatible; out of place  
**infatuated** – obsessed, passionate  
**lyricism** – an emotional or expressive quality  
**radiant** – bright; glowing  
**raffish** – having a carefree or unconventional style  
**redolences** – fragrances  
**reproach** – to scold or criticize  
**spasmodic** – fitful; occurring in a sudden burst  
**unrefined** – crude, unsophisticated  
**valise** – a suitcase  
**vivacity** – liveliness, cheerfulness

1. Describe the setting of the play.

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2. From her very first appearance, how is Blanche’s vulnerability expressed?

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3. Blanche tells Eunice how she arrived at Elysian Fields. What two streetcars did Blanche take to get there? What is the significance of the names of these streetcars?

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4. How does Blanche feel about Stella's home? How does Stella react to her sister's assessments?

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5. According to Blanche, why has she left her teaching job and come to visit Stella?

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6. What are some indications that Blanche may be an alcoholic? Provide examples from the text to support your answer.

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7. What evidence suggests that Blanche is insecure about her appearance?

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8. According to Blanche, what has caused the loss of Belle Reve?

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9. After Blanche explains what happened to Belle Reve, Stella leaves the room crying. Why is she upset?

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10. According to the stage notes, what kind of person is Stanley Kowalski? What is his attitude toward women?

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11. How is the basic contrast between Stanley and Blanche presented in this opening scene? What does each character seem to represent?

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12. As the scene ends, Stanley mentions that Blanche had once been married. What is Blanche's reaction? What happened to Blanche's husband?

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